

David Mead - Testimony for HB 6042 & 6043 Hearing on April 28

From: Tracy Coppola <tracyc@AmericanHumane.org>
To: "MikeHuckleberry@house.mi.gov" <MikeHuckleberry@house.mi.gov>,
"dmead@house.mi.gov" <dmead@house.mi.gov>
Date: 4/26/2010 2:55 PM
Subject: Testimony for HB 6042 & 6043 Hearing on April 28
Attachments: Professional Endorsements for 4062-4063 for hearing.doc; American Humane MI EBI fact sheet-final.pdf; Testimony-Allie Phillips-American Humane-Support6042 & 6043.pdf; Doug Fakkema Testimony for HB6042 & 6043 April 28 2010 hearing.pdf; Testimony of Dr. Wendy Swift forHB 6042 & 6043 Hearing on April 28, 2010.pdf

Dear Chair Huckleberry and Mr. Mead:

Attached is the testimony of Doug Fakkema, Dr. Wendy Swift, and Allie Phillips for Wednesday's hearing on HB 6042/6043.

Also attached is the professional endorsement list and the bill factsheet.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need anything else on my end. Thanks so much.

Sincerely,

Tracy Coppola, J.D., M.S.E.L.
Legislative Analyst
American Humane Association
206 N. Washington St., Ste. 300
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: 703-836-PETS (7387)
Fax: 703-549-KIDS (5437)

Testimony from
Tom J. Kalkofen
Director of the Macomb County Health Department
1996-2010

In support of Bills 6042 and 6043
to end poison gas in Michigan



AMERICAN HUMANE

Protecting Children & Animals Since 1877

Professional Endorsements for HB 6042 & 6043 (previously 4263 and 4803)

Michigan's Humane Euthanasia of Shelter Animals bills

(Last updated 4-26-10)

National Organizations (5)

American Humane Association
American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
National Anti-Vivisection Society
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
The Humane Society of the United States

Legal Organizations (3)

Animal Legal Defense Fund
Attorneys for Animals
State Bar of Michigan Animal Law Section

Michigan Municipalities (2)

Antrim County Sheriff's Office (Bellaire)
Arcada Township (Grafton County)

Michigan Veterinarians and Clinics (42)

All About Animals Rescue (Warren)
 Dr. Melissa Munger, DVM
All Creatures Mobile Veterinary Care (Muskegon)
 Dr. Sandra Strandberg, DVM
Dr. Alexandra Bedford, DVM (Richland)
Dr. Jennifer Lynn Bohney, DVM (Marshall)
Cedar Animal Hospital (Cedar Springs)
 Dr. Lawrence Nauta, DVM
Clyde Park Vet Clinic (Wyoming)
 Dr. Jennifer Petrovich, DVM
 Dr. David S. Thompson, DVM
Companion Animal Care Center (Caro)
 Dr. C.L. Galka, DVM
Dandy Acres Small Animal Hospital (South Lyon)
 Dr. Theresa McCarthy, DVM
Dearborn Family Vet Care (Dearborn)
 Dr. Cheryl Good, DVM
DePorre Veterinary Hospital (Bloomfield Hills)

Dr. Jules J. Deporre, DVM
Dr. Tracy Dulak, DVM (Harbor Springs)
Family Friends Veterinary Hospital (Grand Rapids)
Dr. Randall Carpenter, DVM
Fruitport Animal Hospital (Fruitport)
Jeanne Corbett, DVM
Glenpark Animal Hospital (Muskegon)
Goodison Veterinary Center (Rochester)
Dr. Douglas P. Angel, DVM
Happy Tails House Calls, LLC (Grand Haven)
Dr. Denise J. Montagna, DVM
Haslett Animal Hospital (Haslett)
Kylie Moots LVT
Dr. J.A. Haas, DVM, MS (Milford)
Home Health Care for Pets (Whitmore Lake)
Dr. Sharon V. Altrogge, DVM
House Calls Veterinary Hospital (Eagle)
Kristen Stallings, DVM
Humane Society of Kent County (Grand Rapids)
Dr. Wendy Swift, DVM
Jelsema Veterinary Clinic (Hudsonville)
Dr. Julie Eberly, DVM
Dr. Terry Jelsema, DVM
Lakewood Veterinary Hospital (Lake Odessa)
Dr. Nancy L. Bischof, DVM, MPH
Morris Hospital for Veterinary Services (Redford)
Oakland County Animal Control (Orion)
Jeffrey J. Fortna, DVM
Pennsylvania Veterinary Care (Lansing)
Dr. Joseph Leppanen, DVM
Richland Animal Hospital (Richland)
Dr. Kerry Gilbert, DVM
Safe Harbor Animal Hospital (Grand Rapids)
Dr. Richelle Smith, DVM
Schmitts Animal Hospital (Grand Rapids)
Dr. Linda Schmitt, DVM
Schultz Vet Clinic (Okemos)
Dr. Felicia Mallory, DVM
Southpoint Veterinary Hospital (Allen Park)
Dr. Kim Cox, DVM
Dr. Carol McKee, DVM
Turner Veterinary Clinic (Battle Creek)
Dr. Benjamin Huelsbergen, DVM
Vineyard Veterinary Clinic (Barryton)
Dr. Susan Hamilton, DVM

Waverly Animal Hospital (Lansing)

Dr. Kristie Johns, DVM

Dr. Jennifer Stuhler-Raphael, DVM

Dr. C.S. Thrush, DVM

Dr. Bethany Vincent, DVM

Westwood Hills Animal Hospital (Grand Rapids)

Dr. Daniel Hoekema, DVM

Michigan Animal Shelter and Rescue Organizations (119)

Adopt-A-Pet, Inc. (Fenton)

All About Animals Rescue (Eastpointe)

All Species Kinship (Battle Creek)

Animal Aid of South Western Michigan (St. Joseph)

Animal Placement Bureau (Lansing)

Animal Service League, Inc. (Dowagiac)

Backdoor Friends, Inc. (Farmington Hills)

Barry County Humane Society (Hastings)

Broken Road Rescue, Inc. (Laingsburg)

Canine Safe Habor (Kalamazoo)

Carol's Ferals (Grand Rapids)

Charlevoix Area Humane Society (Boyne City)

Cheboygan County Humane Society (Cheboygan)

Citizens for Anti-Cruelty Enforcement (Oshtemo)

Citizens for Animal Rescue & Emergencies (Flint)

Closer to Home Animal Advocates (Belleville)

Cocker Spaniel Rescue (Livonia)

Companion Animal Pet Rescue (Rochester Hills)

Concerned Citizen Coalition (Coral)

Dogs Deserve Better, Inc. (Garden City)

Drogheda Bullmastiff Rescue (Mt. Morris)

Elizabeth Lake Animal Rescue (Union Lake)

Elk Country Animal Shelter (Atlanta)

English Springer Rescue Association (Livonia)

Faithful Friends of Animal Rescue, Inc. (Shelby Twp)

Fat Cat Haven (Cedar Springs)

Fighting for Animal Rights and the Environment (Perry)

Focus on Ferals (Grand Rapids)

Friends of Caring Animal Shelters (Manistee)

Friends of the Animal Shelter (Saginaw)

Friends for the Dearborn Animal Shelter (Dearborn)

Friends of Genesee County Animal Shelter, Inc. (Montrose)

Friends of Ingham County Animals (Lansing)

Friends of Michigan Animal Rescue (Belleville)

Furry Friends Rescue (Brighton)

Grace Greyhound Adoption (Grand Rapids)

Great Dane Rescue, Inc. (Plymouth)
Great Lakes Fancy Rat Association (Northville)
Great Lakes Mastiff Rescue, Inc. (Gladwin)
Harbor Humane Society (West Olive)
Heart of Michigan Animal Rescue (Beaverton)
Heavenly Paws of Michigan (Rochester Hills)
Helping Eaton Animals Resource Team (Charlotte)
Heroes for Homeless Animals (Madison Heights)
Home Furever (Detroit)
Humane Animal Treatment Society (Mt. Pleasant)
Humane Animal Treatment Society – Student Chapter (Troy)
Humane Society and Animal Rescue of Muskegon County, Inc. (Muskegon)
Human Society of Bay County (Essexville)
Humane Society of Grand Valley State (Allendale)
Humane Society of Huron Valley (Ann Arbor)
Humane Society of Kent County (Grand Rapids)
Humane Society of Southwestern Michigan (Benton Harbor)
Isabella County Animal Shelter (Mt. Pleasant)
Isabella County Humane Society (Mt. Pleasant)
Jackson County Animal Rescue Friends (Jackson)
Jackson County Volunteers Against Pound Seizure (Jackson)
K-9 Stray Rescue League (Oxford)
Kalamazoo Animal Liberation League (Kalamazoo)
Kalamazoo County Animal Services (Kalamazoo)
Kalamazoo Humane Society (Kalamazoo)
Katy Bishop's Animal Friends (Bay City)
Kent County Animal Shelter (Grand Rapids)
Lifeline for Pound Buddies (Muskegon)
McCloud's Lake Haven (Newaygo)
Menominee Animal Shelter (Menominee)
Metro Area Animal Adoption Association (Detroit)
Michigan Animal Adoption Network (Roseville)
Michigan Animal Rescue League (Pontiac)
Michigan Cat Rescue (St. Clair Shores)
Michigan Coonhound Rescue (Detroit)
Michigan Federation of Humane Societies and Animal Advocates (Holt)
Michigan Humane Society
Michigan Pet Fund Alliance (Bloomfield Hills)
Michigan Pit Bull Rescue (Lansing)
Michigan Pug Rescue (Farmington)
Mid-Michigan Boxer Rescue (Mt. Morris)
Mid-Michigan Cat Rescue, Inc. (Grand Ledge)
Midwest Boston Terrier Rescue (Kent City)
Missaukee Humane Society (Ludington)
Montcalm County Citizens for Animal Welfare (Greenville)

Northwoods Animal Shelter (Iron River)
Oakland County Animal Care Center (Auburn Hills)
Oakland County Animal Control (Orion)
Otsego County Animal Control (Gaylord)
Out-back Wildlife Rehabilitation Center (Ottawa Lake)
Paws for Life Rescue (Troy)
P.A.W.S. of Michigan (Riverview)
Pit Bulls Are Good Rescue (Lansing)
Pound Pals Downriver (Wyandotte)
Pug Rescue Network (Wixom)
PupLuv Rescue, Inc. (Waterford)
Refurbished Pets of Southern Michigan (Coldwater)
ResQme Foster (Southfield)
Richland Animal Rescue and Equine Shelter (Richland)
Rolling Rescue (Grand Rapids)
Roofs for Woofs Animal Rescue, Inc. (Holly)
ResQ4 Paws (Ortonville)
Sasha Farm (Manchester)
Second Chances (Charlotte)
Second Chance Bouvier Rescue (Westland)
Second Chance Dobes (Clinton)
Shelter to Home (Allen Park)
Silver Lake Animal Rescue League (Waterford)
Sniffy Dogs Bloodhound Rescue (Kentwood)
Songbird Protection Coalition (Lansing)
Special Cats for Special People (Hartland)
St. Francis Animal Rescue (Rochester)
Tall Oaks Kennel, LLC (Whitmore Lake)
Tigerlily Cat Rescue (Sterling Heights)
TLC Chow Rescue (Holland)
Tri-County Collie Rescue (Holly)
Trinity Acres Rescue (Dimondale)
Voiceless-MI (Charlotte)
Volunteers for Muskegon County Animal Control (aka Pound Buddies Rescue) (Muskegon)
Waggin' Tails Dog Rescue, Inc. (Northville)
Westie Rescue of Southeastern Michigan (Troy)
With a Little Help From My Friends, Inc. (Bellaire)
Zimmer Foundation (Ann Arbor)

Michigan Businesses (115)

Adams Madams (Central Lake)
After The Rain (Milford)
Amish Direct Furniture (Sterling Heights)
Arbor Hills Golf Club (Jackson)
Arrow Racing Engines (Auburn Hills)

Associates in Physician Billing, LLC (Novi)
Atlas Welding Accessories, Inc. (Troy)
Bear Packaging & Supply (Mt. Pleasant)
Blue Pelican Inn (Central Lake)
Bobick's Professional Golf Centers (Kalamazoo)
Bohemia Too (Grand Rapids)
Brave Intimates (Royal Oak)
Brooknelle Pet Resort (Freeport)
Brothers Restaurant (Central Lake)
Bryan Dental (Mt. Pleasant)
Caledonia Floral & Gifts (Caledonia)
Camp Bow Wow – Kentwood (Caledonia)
Carol's Cuts (Schoolcraft)
Cats and Dogs Magazine (Jenison)
Central Lake Health Clinic (Charlevoix)
Charles Runyan Enterprises LLC (Grand Rapids)
Club Pet, Inc. (Milford)
Community Spay Neuter Initiative Partnership (C-SNIP) (Kentwood)
Cort Business Services (Kalamazoo)
Creative Surfaces (Harbor Springs)
Critter Sitter (Mason)
Critter Sitters of Bay City (Bay City)
Dobertech, LLC (Belding)
Doggone Spoiled Dog Sitting LLC (Grand Rapids)
DZ Designs (Mason)
Eastwood, LLC (Lansing)
Eastwood [Mall] (East Lansing, MI)
Empress Salon (Ionia)
EVERYbody Reads, LLC (Lansing)
Farms One (Lansing, MI)
Farwell Motorsports (Weidman)
Faz II LLC (Grand Rapids)
Five Star Lanes (Sterling Heights)
Frank Talk Entertainment Magazine (Reading)
Frawgbyte Photography (Highland)
Gary Bruttell Roofing, Inc. (Detroit)
Gone 2 the Dogs (Lansing)
Green Paws Pet Supply (Ann Arbor)
Groomcrafters (Novi)
Gull Centre (Kalamazoo)
Health & Wealth (Lansing)
Hidden Boundaries LLC (Grand Rapids)
Highland Feed & Supply (Highland)
Hog Money Industries (Grand Rapids)
Holiday Pet Resort (Cedar Springs)

Humane Society of Tuscola County (Caro)
Humane Voters of Michigan (Lansing)
Interior Decorator & Design (Central Lake)
J&J Plumbing and Heating (Lansing)
Jelly Roll Blues Band (Harbor Springs)
Jody's Crafts (Cedar Springs)
Just Dogs Gourmet (Milford)
Karas Seal Coating (Lake)
Kellogg Eye Center (West Bloomfield)
Land One, LLC (Lansing)
Lavana Shurtliff Jewelry (Mt. Pleasant)
L.H. Kutinsky, PLLC (Madison Heights)
Liberty Inventories, Inc. (Mason)
Macro Val Healthy Cooking (Westland)
MagnaBenefits Solutions, Inc. (Grand Rapids)
Michigan School of Canine Cosmetology (Lansing)
Milford Feed Co. (Milford)
Mineo's Pizza (Kentwood)
Mohr Industries (Central Lake)
Motorcycles for Mutts (Rockford)
Mulla LLC (Grand Rapids)
Natural Freedom, Inc. (Rochester Hills)
Neotech Medical Corp. (Plainwell)
Noah's Pet Cemetary (Grand Rapids)
North Bark Pet Grooming (Grand Rapids)
On Stage Services (Grand Rapids)
Pawformance Grooming Salon, LLC (Greenville)
Pegasus Paradigms (Southfield)
Performance Mold, Inc. (Clinton Township)
Personal Touch Grooming (Jackson)
Phenix Enterprises, Inc. (North Muskegon)
Polly's Pastries (West Bloomfield)
Premier Pet Supply (Beverly Hills)
Prime Commercial (Kalamazoo, MI)
Redbird Feeds and Pet Supplies (Mt. Pleasant)
Reliv International (Petosky)
RG Enterprises (Grand Ledge)
RTJ Enterprise (Sterling Heights)
SAL Medical Sales (Grand Blanc)
Salon Escape (Novi)
Sam V. Macias Realtors (Lansing)
Satya Yoga Center (Holland)
Savon Drug (Bloomfield)
Seva Studio (East Grand Rapids)
Shaggy Pines Dog Park (Ada)

Sharp Marketing & Advertising (Grand Rapids)
Spartan Pet Distributing (Lansing)
S-Ray Medical (Lansing)
Stanton's Finest Consignment Shop (Stanton)
Synthignition (Lansing, MI)
Teacup Fashions (Southgate)
The Grooming Shop (Highland)
The Pet Pantry (Fruitport)
The Uppity Puppy (West Bloomfield)
Triple Goddess Bookstore (Okemos)
Unlimited Sources (Dryden)
Uno Hair Design (Clawson)
Up Town Threads (Milford)
VBox USA (Clawson)
Vibe Hair Studio (Shelby Township)
Vorpi Chiropractic (Rockford)
Weidman Area Health Clinic (Weidman)
Wild Orchid (Shepherd)
Z's Bar & Restaurant (Grand Rapids)
Zeller's Party Store (Grand Rapids)

Other Michigan Professionals (17)

Richard Angelo, Jr., Esq. (Davison)
The Baskin Law Firm/Henry Baskin, Esq. (Birmingham)
Denise Cole, Esq. (Lansing)
Patrick Cole, Esq. (Lansing)
Linda Fausey, Esq. (Lansing)
Matthew S. Fedor, Esq. (Troy)
Beatrice Friedlander, Esq. (Canton)
Donald Garlit, Esq. (Canton)
Erma Gillis, Esq. (Canton)
L.H. Kutinsky, Esq. (Madison Heights)
Law Office of Patrick Marutiak (Owosso)
Denise Massey, Esq. (Gobles)
Joel R. Saper, M.D. (Ann Arbor)
Amy C. Slameka, Esq. (Detroit)
Gordon A. Snavely, Esq. (Bloomfield Hills)
David Trautman, Architect (Harbor Springs)
Irving M. Weiner, Esq. (Harrisville)

Michigan HB 6042 & 6043 – Humane Euthanasia of Shelter Animals Fact Sheet

1. Euthanasia by Injection (EBI) is the safest way for humans to euthanize shelter animals.

- The American Humane Association has been directly involved in training shelter euthanasia technicians on properly administering euthanasia by injection for decades. This on-site assistance has definitively shown that EBI is the safest and humane way to euthanize shelter animals.
- Carbon monoxide poses a danger to humans because it is colorless, tasteless, odorless, and highly explosive¹. A gas chamber must be constantly checked and maintained to ensure no cracks in the structure or failing seals. When carbon monoxide is released in a confined area, it can cause asphyxiation, kidney damage, or induced coma.
- The gas chamber can jeopardize the safety of shelter workers. In 2008, an explosion in the Iredell County, North Carolina Animal Services' gas chamber revealed that, contrary to recommendations, the equipment in the vicinity of the chamber was not explosion proof. A shelter worker was in the room at the time and other personnel were nearby. In 2000, a shelter worker in Tennessee was asphyxiated to death while operating a faulty gas chamber. And in 1997 a shelter veterinarian in Illinois was severely injured while operating a gas chamber. In contrast, there are no documented reports of any shelter worker being killed from an accidental injection of sodium pentobarbital.²
- The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) 2007 Guidelines on Euthanasia state: "*Carbon Monoxide is extremely hazardous for personnel because it is highly toxic and difficult to detect . . . The advantages of using barbiturates for euthanasia in small animals far outweigh the disadvantages. Intravenous injection of a barbituric acid derivative is the preferred method for euthanasia of dogs, cats, other small animals, and horses.*"³

2. EBI is the *most* humane method of euthanizing shelter animals.

- If successful, the gas chamber can take up to 25 minutes to end an animal's life, whereas EBI causes loss of consciousness within 3 to 5 seconds and death within 5 minutes.⁴ EBI causes animals to lose consciousness and brain function before their vital organs shut down. In a chamber, however, animals lose consciousness and brain function only after their vital organs shut down, causing prolonged suffering and distress.
- EBI is the method preferred by the National Animal Control Association, the American Veterinary Medical Association, the Association of Shelter Veterinarians, and The Humane Society of the United States.
- The American Veterinary Medical Association states that carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide is only suitable for *most* small species.⁵ However, old, neonatal, and injured animals are often biologically unable to absorb the gas as readily as larger or healthier animals, which prolongs trauma and stress.⁶
- Birds and neonatal animals are commonly euthanized by using halothane or isoflurane anesthesia gas, followed by an intraperitoneal injection into the abdominal cavity. Birds are commonly euthanized via an oral injection of sodium pentobarbital. Using dioxide on these animals is unnecessary.
- The animals don't always die in gas chambers, as documented by the fact that a dog survived the St. Louis, MO Animal Regulation Center's gas chamber in 2003 and a puppy survived the Davie County, NC Animal Shelter's gas chamber in 2005.⁷
- Referring to the horrors of carbon monoxide, Doug Fakkema, the nation's animal euthanasia expert,⁸ has stated: "[t]he animal is in a warm or hot box, usually with other animals. They don't know what is going on. They get dizzy, and then they panic. Fights can break out, and animals' calls can sometimes be heard."⁹

3. It is dangerous to put aggressive and/or wild animals in the gas chamber. Sedation methods utilized with EBI are safer for shelter staff in cases of highly aggressive and wild animals, and more humane for those animals. It is much safer to sedate and then inject an aggressive animal instead of dragging it frantically into a gas chamber. Many common restraint methods do not require shelter workers to handle the animal themselves if the animal is deemed dangerous. These include: Restraint poles, squeeze gates, and syringe poles. Shelter workers can then anesthetize the

¹ See Christopher Henry, et al., *Myocardial Injury and Long-term Mortality Following Moderate to Severe Carbon Monoxide Poisoning*, (The Journal of the American Medical Association, Vol. 295, No. 4, 2006).

² "Sodium pentobarbital is not considered a health hazard to staff unless it is deliberately misused or handled incorrectly." (American Humane Association, *Operational Guide for Animal Care and Control Agencies: Euthanasia by Injection*, p. 19, 2005).

³ American Veterinary Medical Association Guidelines on Euthanasia, p.10-11. (2007).

⁴ American Humane Association, *Euthanasia by Injection—Training Guide*, p. 8 (2008).

⁵ American Veterinary Medical Association Guidelines on Euthanasia, p. 30 (2007). AVMA Guidelines also "recommend that inhalant agents not be used alone in animals less than 16 weeks old except to induce loss of consciousness, followed by the use of some other method to kill the animal." (p. 10).

⁶ Grim, Randy, *Miracle Dog: How Quentin Survived the Gas Chamber to Speak for Animals on Death Row*, (Alpine Books, 2005, p. 27).

⁷ See Gunning, Mike, *Puppy Survives Euthanasia Attempt, Trip To Dump*, at <http://www.freewebs.com/animalshelternews/index.htm>.

⁸ Doug Fakkema is a trainer and consultant for American Humane with over 35 years' experience in animal protection. He conducts euthanasia workshops around the country. See Doug Fakkema, *Comparison of Sodium Pentobarbital and Carbon Monoxide as Euthanasia Agents*, www.oregon.com/kindness/cbi-vs-co.html.

⁹ Mott, Maryann. *Animal Gas Chambers Draw Fire in U.S.*, National Geographic News, April 11, 2005.

animal with an intramuscular injection of pre-euthanasia drugs, followed by Sodium Pentobarbital once the animal is unconscious. If these restraint methods are not available, shelter workers can give aggressive animals Sodium Pentobarbital by mouth by mixing its powder form (called Fatal Plus) with canned food or by squirting it into the animal's mouth. Once the animal is unconscious, they can administer a lethal dose of the drug.¹⁰

4. This bill does not regulate veterinary services.

Of the 11 shelters that currently euthanize by gas in Michigan, none of those shelters have a veterinarian performing euthanasia. This bill simply regulates shelter services in relation to euthanasia and does not impact veterinarians.

5. Many states have passed laws prohibiting carbon dioxide and monoxide euthanasia of shelter animals.

Currently, only nine states have laws that explicitly ban all forms of gassing for all types of animals in shelters (including ferals and wildlife): Arizona, Delaware, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Washington, and Wyoming. Connecticut, Florida, Maine, Maryland, New Mexico, Tennessee, and Virginia have prohibited carbon dioxide and monoxide for shelter cats and dogs.

6. The Headlee Amendment is not implicated by this bill.

Article 9, Section 29 of the Headlee Amendment states that "A new activity or service or an increase in the level of any activity or service BEYOND THAT REQUIRED BY EXISTING LAW shall not be required by the legislature or any state agency of units of Local Government, unless a state appropriation is made and disbursed to pay the unit of Local Government for any necessary increased costs." Animal shelters, and their activities, are discretionary services under Michigan law (MCL 287.289a). Therefore, a new law setting forth permitted euthanasia techniques does not mandate a "new service" requiring funding.

7. EBI provides shelter workers the dignity they deserve when facing the difficult reality of euthanizing pets.

American Humane's knows first-hand that most shelter workers wish to hold and comfort a frightened animal in its final moments of life. That act may be the only kindness the animal has ever known. In contrast, the gas chamber is both inhumane and demoralizing to the emotional and physical health of human beings and animals.

8. A 2009 study by American Humane shows EBI is less costly than gas to communities.

American Humane recently commissioned a study on the costs associated between EBI and gas. Using data from an animal sheltering organization in North Carolina, the number of dogs and cats euthanized in 2007 was 5,427. The study shows that the cost to use carbon monoxide gas is \$4.98 per animal. The cost to use carbon monoxide poisoning without a tranquilizer is \$4.66 per animal. The cost to use EBI, however, was only \$2.29 per animal.¹¹ Cost figures from North Carolina are comparable to other states, including Michigan. Thus, EBI is more cost effective than gas. Moreover, it is unnecessary for the state to expend any dollars to help a shelter transition to EBI. Of the 11 gassing shelters remaining in Michigan, 5 already have EBI systems in place and the remaining shelters can transition to EBI through the help of their community, as well as state and national animal welfare organizations. American Humane is prepared to financially help Michigan's gassing shelters to purchase EBI supplies and receive EBI training so that the transition is not costly to the local community.

9. The vast majority of Michigan shelters have already made the transition to EBI, and the transition process is not difficult.

Only 8 Michigan animal shelters currently euthanize animals by carbon monoxide and 3 by carbon dioxide. Five currently have an EBI back-up system, and 1 is undergoing training. Michigan has a law that permits shelter technicians to directly administer EBI drugs (commercially-available sodium pentobarbital) without supervision by a veterinarian,¹² and a majority of shelters are licensed to receive EBI drugs. The Department of Community Health certifies shelters to obtain EBI drugs, and the forms to apply are readily available online. Access to the EBI drugs is also readily available. Fatal Plus, the brand with the overwhelmingly largest market share, is made at Vortech Pharmaceuticals, Inc. in Dearborn, MI. American Humane is also available to help with the transition for shelters.

For more information, please contact:

American Humane Association – Office of Public Policy
703-836-7387 or Publicpolicy@americanhumane.org

¹⁰ Mr. Fakkema states: "I can euthanize a dangerous dog in his/her kennel by feeding sodium pentobarbital—no handling necessary." See <http://www.animalpeoplenews.org/06/10/carbongaschambers106.html>.

¹¹ January 2009; Doug Fakkema, Consultant to Animal Care & Control, Commissioned by American Humane Association. *Study available upon request.*

¹² Public Act 368 of 1978, MCL 333.7333 (13).



AMERICAN HUMANE

Protecting Children & Animals Since 1877

Testimony by Allie Phillips, J.D., Vice President of Public Policy
for the American Humane Association
Before the Michigan House of Representatives Agriculture Committee
In support of HB 6042 and 6043
April 28, 2010

My name is Allie Phillips and I am the Vice President of Public Policy for the American Humane Association. American Humane is the nation's oldest non-profit non-partisan organization with 132 years dedicated to creating a more humane and compassionate world by ending abuse and neglect of children and animals. We are not the "humane society" and are not affiliated with any other national animal welfare organization, but we do have animal shelters as members of our organization. I thank Chairman Huckleberry for setting these bills for a hearing and submit the following testimony in support of House Bills 6042 and 6043 sponsored by House Representatives Rick Jones and Fred Miller.

House Bills 6042 and 6043 would prohibit animal shelters and Class B dealers from euthanizing shelter cats and dogs by gas and, instead, allow these animals to be euthanized by injection (EBI). As a Michigander, licensed Michigan attorney, and an animal advocate in Michigan, I know that Michigan is ready to eliminate this practice from its shelters. There is widespread support through the state for passage of these bills. This initiative is endorsed by over 11,000 Michigan residents, 119 Michigan animal shelters and rescue organizations, 115 Michigan businesses, 41 Michigan veterinarians, 5 national animal welfare organizations, and 3 law profession organizations including the Michigan State Bar Animal Law Section.

Michigan would not be alone in having a law of this kind. Fifteen states have banned carbon monoxide¹, seventeen states have banned carbon dioxide for shelter animals², and nine states have completely banned all gassing for all animals.³ So this is not a novel concept.

As I travel across the country training on a variety of animal welfare topics, I have come to learn that although Michigan has some of the best animal anti-cruelty laws in the country, Michigan is also known for having some of the worst laws to protect shelter animals. Allowing death by gas is one of those practices.

American Humane considers EBI to be the only humane, safe, and cost-effective means of euthanasia for animals in animal shelters. This conclusion is based on decades of research and on-site assistance to shelters regarding humane, medicinal practices toward animals. It is the method also preferred by the American Veterinary Medical Association, the National Animal Control Association, and the Association of Shelter Veterinarians. EBI is the method used in veterinarians' offices. Sodium Pentobarbital is a medicine that causes loss of consciousness within seconds after it is administered.

¹ Arizona, California, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wyoming.

² Arizona, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maine, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and Wyoming.

³ Arizona, Delaware, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Washington, and Wyoming

American Humane conducted a survey of Michigan shelters and has determined that only 10 shelters currently utilize gas (either partially or exclusively) to euthanize shelter animals. Those shelters are:

- Berrien County Animal Control (carbon monoxide) – Has an EBI backup
- Branch County Animal Control (carbon monoxide) – Has an EBI backup
- Cass County Animal Control (carbon monoxide) – Has an EBI backup
- Gratiot County Animal Control (carbon monoxide) - Undergoing EBI training
- Lake County Animal Control (carbon monoxide) – Has an EBI backup and is transitioning to EBI
- Mecosta County Animal Services (carbon dioxide)
- Shiawassee County Animal Control (carbon dioxide for ferals and wildlife only)
- St. Joseph County Pound and Animal Control (carbon monoxide)
- Huron Township Animal Shelter (carbon monoxide)
- Van Buren County Animal Control (carbon monoxide) – Has an EBI backup

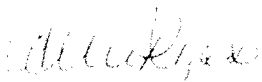
Midland County Animal Control voted on April 6, 2010 to ban carbon monoxide euthanasia and is working on their transition away from gas. Of these 10 remaining shelters, 6 shelters have an EBI backup in place thus making the transition simpler. The remaining shelters are in violation of AVMA guidelines by not having an EBI backup the AVMA guidelines state that animals of certain sizes, ages, and dispositions should not be gassed.. American Humane is also concerned that some counties may be utilizing the services of USDA Class B dealers to perform gas euthanasia of shelter cats and dogs.

Passing HB 4062/4063 will not impose any financial hardship for shelters that need to transition.

American Humane has a history of providing grants to assist animal shelters. **American Humane has a grant available to help shelters financially transition to EBI.** Our grant involves removing the gas chamber and dismantling it, purchasing EBI supplies, and providing free EBI training. Dr. Wendy Swift, the Medical Director for the Humane Society of Kent County, is an American Humane EBI trainer and is available to assist these shelters. Therefore, there is no financial barrier to passing these bills if these shelters wish to take advantage of our grant program.

American Humane is concerned that the Michigan Veterinary Medical Association and Michigan Farm Bureau are actively opposing these bills. American Humane enjoys positive working relationships with the American Veterinary Medical Association and other state veterinary medical associations. American Humane has also established positive relationships with Farm Bureaus across the country as a result of our American Humane Certified program for the humane treatment of farm animals. We have reassured both organizations that these bills do not impact their interests and we amended the bill in its early drafting stages to ensure that its scope only applies to shelter cats and dogs. We understand their concerns about the “slippery slope” but feel that we need to focus on the clear and simple language of these bills which solely focus on shelter cats and dogs. We hope that all interested parties understand that Michigan needs to be a part of the progressive movement away from gas euthanasia and to move our shelters away from this outdated and inhumane practice. We are open to continuing any future dialogue on this issue with interested parties. To help ensure a more humane Michigan for future generations, please pass HB 6042 and 6043. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Allie Phillips, J.D.

Vice President of Public Policy

alliep@americanhumane.org



AMERICAN HUMANE

Protecting Children & Animals Since 1877

Testimony by Doug Fakkema, Consultant to Animal Care & Control
Before the Michigan House Committee on Agriculture
In support of HB 6042/6043
April 28, 2010

Thank you Chairman Huckleberry for the opportunity to submit the following testimony in strong support of House Bill 6042/6043 sponsored by Representatives Fred Miller and Rick Jones.

The bills are a product of the original euthanasia legislation drafted by the American Humane Association, with the assistance of the State Bar of Michigan Animal Law Section, and filed by Representative Rick Jones in February 2009. These bills have the endorsement of Michigan Humane Society, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, The Humane Society of the United States, along with hundreds of Michigan animal shelter/rescue organizations and businesses, dozens of veterinarians and thousands of voters. These bills were written to require animal shelters and USDA Class B Dealers (animal brokers) to utilize euthanasia by injection (**EBI**), which is overwhelmingly the method of euthanasia in the Michigan animal shelters and practiced by veterinarians for their terminally ill patients. These bills would prohibit gassing shelter cats and dogs with carbon monoxide or carbon dioxide as a form of euthanasia.

My name is Douglas Fakkema. I am here to represent the American Humane Association and my experience working full time in animal care and control for nearly 39 years. I have been a full-time EBI trainer and consultant to animal care and control and veterinarians for the past twenty years. I have taught several thousand 1- and 2-day EBI certification workshops throughout the United States and beyond, addressed veterinary conferences on the topic of EBI and written workbooks and other materials related to the subject of EBI. Over the past 20+ years, I have consulted with dozens of organizations in their effort to switch from chamber to EBI. I have analyzed and studied the impact of both cost and emotional affect on the organization and the worker and believe without a doubt that EBI is superior in all aspects.

It is my professional opinion that Michigan needs a law requiring EBI for shelter cats and dogs for these reasons:

I. EBI is the only safe and humane way to euthanize shelter animals.

When a family pet needs to be put to death, veterinarians utilize EBI to end the animal's suffering. They do not use gas chambers.

The animals don't always die in gas chambers, as documented by the fact that a dog survived the St. Louis, MO Animal Regulation Center's gas chamber in 2003 and a puppy survived the Davie County, NC Animal Shelter's gas chamber in 2005. The AVMA recommends states "it is important to verify that an animal is dead before removing it from the chamber." This recommendation illustrates that there are expectations that shelter personnel may have to repeatedly attempt to euthanize an animal with gas.

I have used and inspected chamber devices from the early 1970s on. I have observed countless gas chamber cycles through the tiny glass viewport. The animal is placed in a hot stuffy box (chamber), usually with other animals. They don't know what is going on. The hiss of the gas is loud to their sensitive ears. They get dizzy, and then they panic, fights can break out, and animals' calls and their frantic scratching at the door can be heard. The sound of the animals inside the chamber is so distressing to the worker that he or she usually pushes the "start" button on the chamber and immediately leaves the room.

When handling feral and/or aggressive cats and dogs, EBI is quite safe for shelter workers. Best Practices techniques permit shelter workers to anesthetize a dangerous animal via an intramuscular injection and once unconscious, administer sodium pentobarbital to the now safe to handle animal instead of dragging it frantically into a gas chamber. Many commercially available (or home built) restraint and safety devices permit shelter workers to safely handle dangerous animals. These devices include: restraint poles, squeeze gates, and syringe poles.

If these restraint methods are not available or practical, shelter workers can give aggressive animals Sodium Pentobarbital orally by mixing its powder form with canned food or by squirting the solution into an animal's mouth. Once the animal is unconscious, they can administer a lethal dose of the drug via hypodermic needle. Proper training helps ensure that employees are capable of dealing with these types of animals.

American Humane Association's EBI curriculum covers humane, safe and efficient administration of sodium pentobarbital to feral cats, fractious dogs, sick, old and infant animals. I have been teaching these techniques for many, many years and know they are practical, safe and effective.

II. Gas is an *unnecessary* and *ineffective* method of shelter animal euthanasia

Many states have rejected the practice of euthanasia via carbon monoxide or carbon dioxide gas. It is illegal or not permitted in states from Maine to California, Florida to Washington State. Transitioning to EBI would ensure shelter animals a humane death in those cases where rehoming (adoption) is not possible due to temperament or ill health.

Frankly I do not understand why a progressive state like Michigan is considering this issue controversial. There is simply no need to use gas chambers. Like horse and buggy, gas chambers once had a place but that place is long past. The arguments put forth by opponents to the bill are specious and at times simply ridiculous. In point of fact, EBI has been best practices

for decades. I know because I've been working in animal care and control since 1971. The first animal shelter where I was employed used a chamber. My very first day on the job I saw first hand how brutal such a device was, how awful it was to have to cram an animal into the rolling cage then into the box and then slam the door, lock it and push the button. I would not wish this procedure on any shelter worker knowing how much more effective, gentle and humane EBI is. Nor would I wish this procedure on an animal for they deserve the best possible death. If we must euthanize them then they deserve to die with dignity and respect.

As shelter worker for nearly 40 years, a trainer for over 20 years and an expert on EBI, I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that there is no practical reason to use carbon monoxide or carbon dioxide gas for animal shelter euthanasia. Every animal to be euthanized, from wild to fractious and feral can be safely and effectively put to death via EBI. This is not theory, I have done and taught it countless times in nearly 4 decades.

The use of carbon dioxide is particularly perplexing to me. As far as I know, of all the fifty states, only Michigan animal shelters still use this particular gas (and only a very few shelters at that). It is NOT humane to use CO₂. Anyone who has ever caught a whiff of CO₂ when popping the top on a carbonated (CO₂) soft drink can know how uncomfortable the gas can be. Multiply that with a required gas concentration of 60% and there is little wonder why animals are visibly distressed by this process. The resulting reduction of oxygen (hypoxia) produces dizziness, disorientation, nausea, sleepiness and confusion before loss of consciousness. This is not a humane death. The ONLY argument for CO₂ is to kill feeder mice for reptiles and raptors and there are other methods available for this purpose that do not employ gas.

III. Carbon Monoxide is Extremely Hazardous to Human Health

Carbon monoxide is colorless, tasteless, odorless, and explosive. As such, shelter workers have been injured or killed due to faulty gas chambers. On page 10 of its 2007 Guidelines on Euthanasia, American Veterinary Medical Association states: "*Carbon Monoxide is extremely hazardous for personnel because it is highly toxic and difficult to detect. . .*"

By contrast I know of not one single incident of accidental death or serious injury due to sodium pentobarbital. The argument that workers will abuse the drug if the bill passes is almost too ridiculous to discuss. The facts speak for themselves. Shelter workers do not abuse the drug nor do veterinarians or veterinary technicians. Can the drug be abused? Yes. Is it abused? No. The argument that shelter workers will abuse sodium pentobarbital is like saying that we should not permit the sale of alcoholic beverages because the people employed in bars and liquor stores will then become alcoholics.

EBI requires the use of the drug sodium pentobarbital, which is a Class II controlled drug substance. Animal shelters have been lawfully purchasing, storing and administering sodium pentobarbital since the federal *Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act* was passed by Congress in 1970. The rules promulgated (Title 21 of the CFR, Part 1300-end) set up reasonable, practical and effective measures to prevent the illegal diversion of sodium pentobarbital.

IV. EBI is less costly than gas.

In 2009, I was commissioned by the American Humane Association to create a cost comparison study between CO and EBI. The study used data from an actual animal shelter and is applicable to other states. It shows that the cost to use carbon monoxide gas is \$4.98 per animal. The cost to use carbon monoxide without a tranquilizer is \$4.66 per animal. The cost to use EBI was significantly less at \$2.29 per animal. The cost study accurately factored time, materials, equipment and depreciation.

Best practices recommend the use of 2 personnel when performing EBI. This is not always possible in small facilities or after hours. In such cases it is safe and practical to perform emergency euthanasia on sick and injured, suffering animals with one trained and certified employee.

V. Sodium Pentobarbital is the industry standard for EBI. No shortage of the drug is expected.

Concerns about sodium pentobarbital being unavailable in the future are based on a rumor with no actual basis in fact. Approximately nine years ago there was a temporary shortage of sodium pentobarbital due to an active ingredients manufacturer shutdown by FDA; minor deficiencies were noted on a routine inspection and the manufacturer was ordered to come up to compliance. The shortage lasted a few months and full supply of the product returned. There is no shortage at present nor is one anticipated. In fact, the principal manufacturer of sodium pentobarbital for animal shelter euthanasia is Vortech Pharmaceuticals, Ltd located in Dearborn, Michigan. Sodium Pentobarbital is a controlled drug substance under federal law. It is not difficult for shelters to obtain the necessary authorization to order, store and administer the drug. In fact, Michigan has a direct access law that allows shelter technicians to administer sodium pentobarbital.

VI. It is important that HB 6042/6043 allow sodium pentobarbital to be administered by injection or orally.

Best practices allow a “per os” (oral dose) of sodium pentobarbital given via a feeding tube or dosing needle, or as a powder added to food, as in the case of fractious animals. The bill, as written, solely allows administration via injection. The language must include allow use of a “commercially prepared substance administered orally or by injection.”

I have found oral administration to be an effective, safe and humane means for euthanasia of dangerous animal shelter dogs. I have used this route of administration many times in the past 25+ years. The pentobarbital sodium powder must be thoroughly mixed with quality-canned food and preferably its bitter taste masked with something sweet like honey, catsup or syrup.



HUMANE SOCIETY OF KENT COUNTY

3077 Wilson NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49534 🐾 (616) 453-8900 🐾 FAX (616) 453-5752 🐾
www.hskc.org

April 23, 2010

My name is Wendy Swift DVM, and I am here today as a shelter veterinarian and on behalf of the American Humane Association to express my support of the House Bills 6042 and 6043, sponsored by Representatives Fred Miller and Rick Jones. I have been practicing shelter medicine at the Humane Society of Kent County for over 8 years. During this time I have been certifying individuals through private classes to perform humane euthanasia by injection (EBI) and within the last year have been instructing students in a formal group setting as a certified EBI trainer for American Humane.

The American Veterinary Medical Association has published guidelines on euthanasia. When evaluating the process of euthanasia for their recommendations they looked at twelve different criteria in an attempt to follow the true definition of euthanasia which is "good death". A good death is one free of pain and anxiety/distress.

The first component to a good death is a rapid loss of consciousness leading to death without causing pain, distress, anxiety, or apprehension. EBI fulfills this requirement in all circumstances ranging from easily handled animals to aggressive dogs and feral cats. Any animal that can not be gently restrained can be anesthetized with minimal handling in a safe and controlled manner.

The Humane Society of Kent County utilizes a combination of drugs called "premix" to anesthetize difficult to handle animals before administering Fatal Plus, which is a commercially prepared agent for euthanasia. The "premix" injection is given in the animal's muscle by a technique that minimizes visual, tactile, and auditory stimulation. This process allows for microchip scanning prior to euthanizing the animal and would allow for complete recovery from the drugs if an owner was identified.

The second component is the time to which a loss of consciousness is induced. EBI allows for rapid loss of consciousness. Euthanasia induced by utilizing an inhalant such as carbon dioxide gas, especially when multiple animals are put in the enclosure, is not a fast process. In fact, depending on where the animal is located in the enclosure it may not even reach a state of unconsciousness.

The third component is reliability. EBI is one hundred percent reliable. Clinical death can be confirmed in all cases, and the commercially manufactured products provide consistent efficacy regarding the amount of drug needed per animal.

The fourth component is the safety of personnel. Michigan state law requires any individual that is performing euthanasia be trained by a licensed veterinarian. Through the minimum of sixteen hours of training, individuals are educated on the safety measures that should be taken while handling the medications used when performing EBI.

The fifth component is irreversibility. EBI is not reversible in any species, age group, or due to any health condition. This statement does not apply when utilizing gas for performing euthanasia. Neonates have been known to walk out of gassing enclosures or even freezers after death was thought to have been achieved.

The sixth component is compatibility with requirement and purpose. EBI conforms with all state and local requirements in Michigan. The AVMA's position is that EBI performed with a commercially produced product is the preferred method of euthanasia for dogs and cats.

The seventh component is emotional effect on observer and operators. EBI is utilized by veterinarians in private practice to euthanize their terminally ill or severe behavior cases when owners are present. Personally, I do not know of any veterinarians in the state of Michigan that use any other method of euthanasia regardless if the owner is present.

EBI certified technicians that have performed both EBI and gas euthanasia techniques report that their compassion fatigue was much less when using EBI. One staff member stated that she would have nightmares about cats she had placed in a barrel with multiple other cats for euthanasia. All nightmares stopped after the shelter started using EBI, and the staff member said she felt closure and not guilt about every animal that she euthanized.

The eighth component is compatibility with subsequent evaluation, examination, or use of tissue. EBI does not affect the ability to perform necropsy or submit diagnostic testing. Shelters do not have to be concerned with result interference when submitting viral (rabies, parvo, panleuk, etc.) or bacterial (kennel cough complex, feline respiratory disease, gastrointestinal diseases, etc.) testing to outside labs.

The ninth component is drug availability and human abuse potential. Commercially prepared euthanasia products will always be available. There are multiple companies that manufacture these products, and shelters in Michigan can purchase these drugs direct without a veterinarian's assistance. Shelters can also purchase ketamine and telazol direct as long as they obtain a schedule III DEA license along with their schedule II license.

Human abuse potential is a possibility, but with the legal requirements for technician certification and logging the use of the euthanasia solution it is very improbable. Only certified technicians are allowed to handle the drug and when not in use it is stored in a drug safe away from other staff and the public. Many veterinary clinics are broken into and it is always ketamine and other drugs that are documented as being stolen and not the drugs utilized for euthanasia.

The tenth component is compatibility with species, age, and health status. Regardless of any of these factors an animal can be euthanized safely and effectively by EBI. Whether it is a geriatric dog with a heart condition, a puppy that was hit by a car, or a cat with severe upper respiratory disease, EBI can be utilized to insure the animal a "good death".

The eleventh component is the ability to maintain equipment in proper working order. EBI requires minimal equipment that is not already found in an animal shelter. Restraint equipment can be easily maintained and/or replaced when broken beyond repair. The euthanasia solution, supplies necessary for performing injections, and a drug safe require minimal maintenance if any and very little actual physical space inside the shelter. Not to mention, the cost of these products is relatively low, therefore making the cost of EBI much less than other methods.

The last component considered when evaluating methods of euthanasia is safety for the predators/scavengers should the carcass be consumed. In Michigan, the standards by which animal carcasses can be disposed are high. In West Michigan, there are only two landfills that are legally able to accept carcasses for disposal. Animal carcasses can be rendered or cremated for about the same financial expense to the shelter. Due to the water table regulations in Michigan, animal carcasses regardless of reason for death or method of euthanasia are not to be buried without consent from the local authorities.

Veterinarians offer cremation services to pet owners. Shelters can also offer the same service for their owner requested euthanasia. Not only will this allow for partnership with a crematorium for carcass disposal, but the general public will be impressed with the kind gesture of providing closure during their time of loss.

As a shelter veterinarian, I deal with the reality of euthanasia daily. As a pet owner, I have had to euthanize my own pets. EBI is what I choose for my own pet, what I recommend to my clients for their pets, and what I believe is the only method of euthanasia for shelter animals. If shelter dogs and cats could speak for themselves, they would agree that they deserve a “good death” if death is their only option. Be a voice for the animals and support humane euthanasia: House Bill 6042 and 6043.

Wendy Swift DVM
Veterinary Medical Director
Humane Society of Kent County
(616) 791-8218
wendy@hskc.org

April 28, 2010

My name is Thomas J. Kalkofen and I appreciate the opportunity to offer written testimony to encourage passage of legislation to eliminate the use of gas chambers for euthanasia of certain animals.

I present the following information from the perspective of a person with 38 years of Public Health experience, 14 years as Director/Health Officer of Macomb County Health Department. Prior to my retirement February 1, 2010, I was responsible for the activities of a local Health Department with 250 employees, a budget of over 20 million dollars per year and service delivery responsibility to a community of well over 800,000 residents. In Macomb County, the Animal Shelter is organizationally a part of the Health Department.

The Macomb County Animal Shelter not only enforces State Statutes and Macomb County Regulations, it, by contract, is the holding facility for all municipalities with local regulations.

The Shelter, therefore, handles 12,000 plus animals per year. Many of the animals are returned to their owners, others are put up for adoption, and unfortunately many of them are euthanized. Additionally, Macomb County accepts, as a service to residents, pets and other small animals for owner-requested euthanasia. While the goal is to dramatically reduce the number of animals that are euthanized, the reality is that several thousand animals are put to sleep at Macomb County Animal Shelter. Management at the Shelter and the Health Department are working to reduce the number not only for the benefit of the animals, but for the veterinarians and employees at the Shelter responsible for the function.

Prior to 1994, Macomb County Animal Shelter used a gas chamber as one method of euthanasia. By resolution of the Macomb County Board of Commissioners that method of euthanasia was changed from the gas process to injection. All animals, including wild and feral, now receive injections. There were predictions that the process would be expensive and that training costs would be time consuming and costly. None, however, were true. The transition from the chamber to euthanasia by injection was smooth and the cost was far less than projected. There were no major issues and the employees were helpful and co-operative.

Training was provided by the part-time veterinarians at the Shelter. All requirements for certification were easily met at a negligible cost. All animal control employees at the shelter are trained and certified. The primary responsibility for euthanasia is with the veterinarians assisted by employees. The injection procedure is far less traumatic and stressful to the employees as well as the animals. If necessary, staff members are able to euthanize by injection.

The cost of the procedure is low. The approximate costs of euthanasia by injection at Macomb County Animal Shelter per animal are:

Dogs average weight 40 lbs.

4cc's	
Vet time	\$2.18
Kennel Attendant	.34
Product	<u>.72 (4cc)</u>
	\$3.24

Cats average weight 6 lbs.

1 cc	
Vet time	\$2.18
Kennel Attendant	.34
Product	<u>.18 (1cc)</u>
	\$2.70

Needles and syringes are purchased at Health Department contract prices and are not significant in the calculation of cost.

The unit costs are reasonable because the actual time needed to complete the tasks is predictable and can be controlled by schedule. Use of the chamber, by its very nature, is not as predictable.

I am certainly not an animal expert, nor do I speak as a representative of an animal advocacy organization. I do bring for your consideration the perspective of having gone through the process, evaluated the outcome and observed the results.

The transition, as mentioned, was smooth. The cost is reasonable and will not cause major budget issues particularly in these difficult times. Training at an Animal Shelter should be ongoing. The training for euthanasia by injection is no more costly or complicated than any other training that occurs and the procedure is less stressful for employees.

I have observed both procedures and have evaluated them from an organizational perspective. There is absolutely no question that euthanasia by injection is less stressful, economical and far more acceptable to the community than the use of a gas chamber. There may be many issues that present obstacles to passage of this bill. The cost of implementation and training of employees should not be among them. I encourage you to pass this important legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



Thomas J. Kalkofen, M.P.H.
12402 Frank Drive
Romeo, MI 48065